IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method including

at a first device, reading a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively local to said first device and at least some of said information obtained from an information server relatively remote from said first device, and setting values for at least one variable at said first device in response to said information;

at a second device, reading a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively local to said second device and at least some of said information obtained from an information server relatively remote from said second device, and setting values for at least one variable at said second device in response to said information; and

resolving conflicts when said information assigns two inconsistent values to a single variable by determining, for any two sources for said information, a higher priority source and a lower priority source;

wherein at least some of said information is common to both said first device and said second device.

2. (Currently Amended) The A method as in claim 1, wherein said information includes configuration information used at start-up by said first device.

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method as in claim 1, including

recording said information at selected times for said first device;

at said first device, reading said recorded information in addition to said set of

information; and

comparing said recorded information with at least some of said set of information.

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method as in claim 3, wherein said comparison

includes a set of resources from which said information can be obtained by said first device; and

including

re-performing said operations of reading said set of information and setting values

until said set of resources is ~~substantially~~ unchanged.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method as in claim 3, wherein said selected times

include at each restart of said first device.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method as in claim 1, wherein said information

includes a set of resources from which said information can be obtained by said first device.

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method as in claim 6, wherein said set of

resources includes at least a first file at a first said information server and a second file at a

second information server.

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method as in claim 6, wherein said set of resources includes at least one file at said information server.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method as in claim 1, wherein said information includes a set of values for named variables, and wherein ~~including resolving conflicts when said information assigns two inconsistent values to a single variable,~~ said ~~operation of~~ resolving conflicts further includes ~~including determining, for any two sources for said information, a higher priority said source and a lower priority said source;~~ parsing, from said ~~a~~ higher priority source, an instruction relating to setting said variable; and performing said instruction from said higher priority source.

10. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method as in claim 9, wherein said instruction has a syntactic form indicating one or more of the following operations:

replacing a value from said lower priority source with a value from said higher priority source, or

appending a value from said higher priority source to a value from said lower priority source.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ including

at least one information server;

a first device relatively remote from said information server, said first device including memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by said first device to read a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively local to said first device and at least some of said information obtained from said information server, and to set values for at least one variable at said first device in response to said information;

a second device relatively remote from said information server, said second device including memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by said second device to read a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively local to said second device and at least some of said information obtained from said information server, and to set values for at least one variable at said second device in response to said information;

wherein at least some of said information is common to both said first device and said second device; and

wherein conflicts when said information assigns two inconsistent values to a single variable are resolved by determining, for any two sources for said information, a higher priority said source and a lower priority said source.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ as in claim 11, wherein said memory at said first device includes computer programs and data structures that when performed use said information at start-up by said first device.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ as in claim 11, said first device including

memory having a record of said information at some past time;

memory including computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by said first device to compare said recorded information with at least some of said set of information.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ as in claim 13, wherein said recorded information includes a set of resources from which said information can be obtained by said first device; and said first device including

memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by said first device to re-read said set of information and re-set said values until said set of resources is ~~substantially~~ unchanged.

15. (Currently Amended) A device including a processor and memory, said memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by said processor

to couple said device to an information server using a communication link;

to read a set of configuration information, wherein at least some of said configuration information is located relatively local to said device and at least some of said configuration information is located at said information server;

to resolve conflicts when said configuration information assigns two inconsistent

values to a single variable by determining, for any two sources for said configuration

information, a higher priority said source and a lower priority said source; and

to set values for at least one variable at said device in response to said

configuration information, said configuration information being used at start-up by said device.

16. (Currently Amended) The A device as in claim 15, including

memory having a record of said information at some past time;

wherein said computer programs and data structures are capable of being

performed by said processor to compare said recorded information with at least some of said set

of information.

17. (Currently Amended) The A device as in claim 16, wherein said recorded

information includes a set of resources from which said information can be obtained by said first

device; and wherein said computer programs and data structures are capable of being performed

by said processor to re-read said set of information and re-set said values until said set of

resources is ~~substantially~~ unchanged.

18. (Currently Amended) The A method as in claim 1, wherein said set of

information is disposed at a sequence of locations to be read by said first device.

19. (Currently Amended) A method ~~as in claim 18,~~ including

at a first device, reading a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively local to said first device and at least some of said information obtained from an information server relatively remote from said first device, and setting values for at least one variable at said first device in response to said information;

at a second device, reading a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively local to said second device and at least some of said information obtained from an information server relatively remote from said second device, and setting values for at least one variable at said second device in response to said information;

wherein at least some of said information is common to both said first device and said second device; and

wherein said set of information is disposed at a sequence of locations to be read by said first device; and

further including defining a relative priority for a first and a second information server in response to a relative position of said first and second information server in said sequence.

20. (Currently Amended) A method ~~as in claim 18,~~ including

at a first device, reading a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively local to said first device and at least some of said information obtained from an

information server relatively remote from said first device, and setting values for at least one

variable at said first device in response to said information;

at a second device, reading a set of information, at least some of said information

located relatively local to said second device and at least some of said information obtained from

an information server relatively remote from said second device, and setting values for at least

one variable at said second device in response to said information;

wherein at least some of said information is common to both said first device and

said second device; and

wherein said set of information is disposed at a sequence of locations to be read

by said first device; and

further including selecting said sequence of locations in response to a variable

settable in response to at least one said information server.

21. (Currently Amended) The apparatus ~~Apparatus~~ as in claim 11, wherein said

set of information is disposed at a sequence of locations to be read by said first device.

22. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~Apparatus as in claim 21,~~ including

at least one information server;

a first device relatively remote from said information server, said first device

including memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by

said first device to read a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively

local to said first device and at least some of said information obtained from said information

server, and to set values for at least one variable at said first device in response to said

information;

a second device relatively remote from said information server, said second device

including memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by

said second device to read a set of information, at least some of said information located

relatively local to said second device and at least some of said information obtained from said

information server, and to set values for at least one variable at said second device in response to

said information;

wherein at least some of said information is common to both said first device and

said second device;

wherein said set of information is disposed at a sequence of locations to be read

by said first device; and

wherein ~~including memory having computer programs and data structures capable~~

~~of defining~~ a relative priority is defined for a first and a second information server in response to

a relative position of said first and second information server in said sequence.

23. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~Apparatus as in claim 21,~~ including

at least one information server;

a first device relatively remote from said information server, said first device

including memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by

said first device to read a set of information, at least some of said information located relatively

local to said first device and at least some of said information obtained from said information

server, and to set values for at least one variable at said first device in response to said

information;

a second device relatively remote from said information server, said second device

including memory having computer programs and data structures capable of being performed by

said second device to read a set of information, at least some of said information located

relatively local to said second device and at least some of said information obtained from said

information server, and to set values for at least one variable at said second device in response to

said information;

wherein at least some of said information is common to both said first device and

said second device;

wherein said set of information is disposed at a sequence of locations to be read

by said first device; and

wherein ~~including memory having computer programs and data structures capable~~

~~of selecting~~ said sequence of locations is selected in response to a variable settable in response to

at least one said information server.